



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations

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STATEMENT

BY

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DURING

THE

**GENERAL DEBATE
ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ON HOUSING AND
SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING
OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
PROGRAMME (UN-HABITAT)**

AT THE

**71ST SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**October 25, 2016
United Nations, New York**

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Mr. Chairman,

My delegation welcomes the convening of this session.

We also welcome the presentation of the comprehensive report on the Implementation of the Outcomes of the UN Conference on Human Settlements on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and the strengthening of UN-Habitat.

This debate is indeed very timely. It follows the adoption last week in Quito of the New Urban Agenda.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our most sincere appreciation for the very warm welcome and hospitality extended to my delegation by the Government and people of Ecuador.

Mr. Chairman,

Kenya attaches the highest importance to the New Urban Agenda. We welcome the reiteration of the importance of the Nairobi Headquarters of UN-Habitat.

We pay tribute to the sustained contribution of stakeholders leading to the outcome in Quito. We also thank our partners for their generous support to the Trust Fund. It made it possible for delegates from developing countries to participate in the Habitat PrepComs and the subsequent Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

The projected growth of the world's population is expected to exceed 9 billion by 2050. This, I believe, is a matter of great concern to all of us. An estimated two third's of that population will live in cities.

Kenya believes the Outcome Document lays a firm foundation to promote inclusive cities and a human settlements' development agenda.

More significantly, it provides a framework to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

The agenda recognizes the development challenges experienced in the management of sustainable cities and human settlements. In addition, it explores innovative methods of coping with demographic trends and rapid rates of urbanization that constantly put tremendous pressure on cities, especially in developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

In essence, the outcome of the conference reflects a renewed political commitment to sustainable urban development. It will provide the basis for reviewing the mandate of UN-Habitat. This will be premised on our 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the New Urban Agenda.

My delegation is convinced that the fact that the New Urban Agenda incorporates the means for effective implementation, it will provide an added impetus to our work ahead.

We must not lose sight of the fact the Agenda will require both financial and non-financial resources. Official Development Assistance will be important and I believe, and will be a catalyst to domestic resource mobilization.

Mr. Chairman,

In Kenya, 37% of the population lives in urban areas. We envisage the population to exceed 50% by 2030. It will require increased investment in the provision of basic infrastructure and services.

Our urban centres are drivers of economic growth. They account for a significant proportion of physical, financial and intellectual capital.

Urban based economic activities account for the bulk of our GDP.

Our key focus is resource mobilization. Therefore, our priority is to increase our domestic resources above the current 22% of the GDP in the medium term. In view of our new status as a middle income country, we expect to face challenges in accessing funding from international financial sources which is declining.

Expenditure and investment in Kenya has been devolved to the 47 counties in the country and taking into consideration the autonomy of counties in designing and managing their programmes, they will require financial and technical support.

We appeal for upscaling of international cooperation to enhance the capacity of counties.

We believe the measures the Government has introduced such as reducing the corporate tax rate for developers for at least 1,000 housing units from 30% to 20% will address the annual 150,000 deficit of housing units. It will also unlock

the potential of the private sector as the Governments partner in implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

Kenya once again, reiterates its call for strengthening UN-Habitat to enable it to play a central role in sustainable urbanization and human settlements. Adequate and predictable funding is therefore, very crucial.

My delegation looks forward to the two-day high-level meeting to be convened by the President of the General Assembly.

I thank you for your attention.